



April 2003

Price Businessman Enjoys Success with Help of DWS Market Data and Employer Services

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Meet Rick Krompel, a second-generation local businessman from Price, Utah, whose grandparents emigrated from Yugoslavia.

Rick just opened a newly constructed **NAPA Auto Parts** store across the street from the Wal-Mart Super Center. The outside panels of the NAPA store are constructed of cement, then given a deep-brown finish and touches of art that make them resemble the rock and pictographs found in Nine Mile Canyon. "Competition is a good thing," says Rick. "We have a deep inventory in car parts and auto supplies. We're excited about the new business."

Rick also owns the **Greenwell Hotel and Convention Center**, a 132-room hotel with plenty of space for meetings and conventions. A third business is **Ricardo's**, a full-service restaurant located near the Greenwell Hotel. He also owns a large lumber store and yard under the franchise name of **CJ's Do It Center**, which opened in 1998. "Ten years ago, the local area was losing 90 percent of its business to the Wasatch Front. We hoped to capture 30 or 40 percent of that when we opened CJ's," says Rick.



The new NAPA auto parts store

How does Rick decide when and what to build? "I am constantly looking at the Internet for the latest economic data, and I have my own sense of when something will work." In gathering data, Rick refers regularly to the Department of Workforce Services' (DWS) Web site, jobs.utah.gov, where employment and financial data are updated regularly. "I also use the wage data available at the same site to help me in setting pay scales for my employees."

Rick uses the DWS' Price Employment Center to assist him in hiring the 100+ workers for his businesses. "I like the service they provide of collecting applications from job seekers and then bringing them to me for my review. It has been a very positive working relationship, and they have developed a good feel for the kind of workers I am looking for.

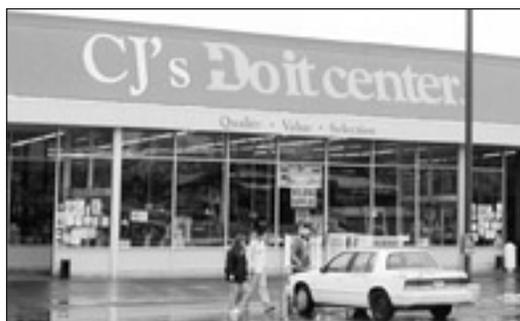
"Our economy used to be tied to the coal mines, which it still is to some degree, but now we have some other economic forces. We have become a regional retail center, we have the methane gas drilling activity, the East Carbon landfill, we have the College of Eastern Utah, and federal and state government offices. I look forward to seeing the area grow."

State of Utah

Department of Workforce Services



Eastern Region
Judy Chambley
Regional Director



Rick Krompel's CJ's Do It Center

1680 West Highway 40
Suite 203B
Vernal, UT 84078
(435) 789-7597
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News You Can Use

Pre-Layoff Assistance

In our changing economy, millions of workers lose their jobs each year because of layoffs or other economic-related conditions. Our Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) provides free pre-layoff assistance to employers and their affected workers when faced with a layoff situation. The overriding strategy of the DWU is to respond rapidly when layoffs are announced and deliver resources to help affected workers transition to new employment. The sooner workers start to manage the transition, the better the outcome for them and you, the employer. Studies show that the impacts of change can be smoother once your workers know that you are concerned about them.

When the DWU obtains information about a layoff, on-site Rapid Response Workshops are offered to the employer to assist the affected workers. These pre-layoff workshops include information on the following:

- Filing for Unemployment Insurance
- Other benefits and services available through the Department of Workforce Services
- Financial planning and protecting your 401(K)
- Extending health insurance under COBRA and other health insurance options
- Labor market information planning and effective job search skills
- Résumés and applications
- Interviewing techniques

For more information contact:

Department of Workforce Services
 Dislocated Worker Unit
 Dawn M. Lay, Rapid Response Coordinator
 140 East 300 South, 5th Floor
 Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
 (801) 526-4312
 FAX (801) 526-9662
 E-mail at dlay@state.ut.us

jobs.utah.gov update

In the first four months of operation there has been a dramatic rise in the number of registered job seekers with graduate degrees. The number of applicants with master's degrees or higher has grown to almost 15 percent of total applicants. Clearly the ability to access job openings via the Internet is attracting higher skilled job seekers!

Eight Prosecuted for Unemployment Fraud

During the month of January 2003, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) successfully prosecuted eight individuals for fraud in connection with their unemployment insurance (UI) claims. The former claimants, seven men and one woman, pled guilty to second and third degree felonies in district courts throughout the state.

"These defendants are required to pay DWS in excess of \$87,000 in overpayments and penalties," said Vince Iturbe, Manager of Benefit Payment Control. "The statutory penalties for UI fraud can double the amount actually received in benefits." In addition, sentences handed down included jail time, community service, court and attorney fees. Some of the defendants immediately made partial payments on their debt.

"We currently have 57 additional cases pending in courts throughout Utah and in other states. Investigation and court preparations continue every day. In the last several years, our methods of fraud detection have become increasingly sophisticated," said Iturbe. "The funds that pay for unemployment insurance benefits come from a tax on Utah's employers. These prosecutions are evidence of our commitment to the proper payment of benefits. Doing so protects the UI trust fund for employers and ensures that money is available to pay benefits to workers who are both eligible and honest," stated Christopher Love, UI Director.



Do you find it helpful to have the latest occupational wage information for Utah and its sub-state areas? That data comes from the yearly OES survey. If your business is surveyed, please fill out and return your form, so that we can continue to publish this very helpful wage information.

Thanks!

DWS Awards \$250,000 for Cultural Integration Grant

As Utah's workplace becomes increasingly more culturally diverse, employers are expressing concerns about how low English proficiency and communication problems are impacting their businesses. They asked Governor Leavitt for help at the State Council on Workforce Services meeting held in April 2002.

The governor responded by charging the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to convene a Cultural Integration Advisory Committee to address those concerns. The committee's first step was to commission a telephone survey of over 1,000 randomly selected Utah employers to quantify the impacts of cultural integration and English skills issues and challenges they face.

The survey revealed that limited English proficiency had significant impacts on the workforce associated with technical capability, training, safety, the ability to advance and customer service. The survey also found that a sizable majority of employers (63 percent) would take advantage of a successful cultural integration and English skill-building program, if offered.

A \$250,000 one-year grant was awarded to Granite School District, Adult and Community Education Department on January 14, 2003. The grant will fund services that provide individualized diversity strategies and initiatives for 10 Utah employers. Services may include and are not limited to the following: adult vocational literacy, including English language skills for the limited English proficient person; employment-related cultural integration diversity training and related activities that are clearly linked to the organization's overall business goals and become part of the company's organizational practice.

"It's clear that in order to meet the objectives of Governor Leavitt's 1000-Day economic plan, we address the need of cultural diversity in the workplace," said DWS Deputy Director Darin Brush. "We hope to accomplish this in many ways; this grant is a first step to assist employers in addressing this critical need."

Ten Wasatch Front employers have been selected as participants of this cultural integration grant. While they have varying needs, all share the common philosophy that communication must be open and effective, whereby the employee will understand the company's mission, vision and values. There must be opportunities for the employee to grow and advance.

Granite will work on-site with each employer for the next year to accomplish the following:

- Employers will recognize an increase in English proficiency among a percentage of those employees chosen to participate.
- Employers will be taught employment-related cultural assimilation, which will result in employees having adequate comprehension of everyday workplace necessities. This could include training, advancement opportunities and safety.

At conclusion of the grant, the employer will be left with resources so the services provided can be replicated within the company. During the year-long grant, a model will be developed which will go statewide to all Utah employers in 2004.

For more information on the Cultural Integration Initiative, contact Barbara Darling at the Department of Workforce Services 801-526-9294.

New Wage Data for Utah Just Released!

Brand-new occupational wage data for Utah has just been posted on the DWS/Economic Information Web page. This is the most current, accurate occupational wage data available for Utah.

The main page for wage data is: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/Owi/wages.asp>. From there, you can click down to find wage data for both your area of the state and the state as a whole, definitions of occupational titles, and helpful links to other wage, benefit and labor law-related web pages.

There are also informative articles on geographic differences in Utah wages, national wages vs. Utah wages, information about how this wage data gets collected, and a wage conversion table (hourly to weekly, bimonthly, monthly, annually).

To all of the employers who participated in last year's *Occupational Employment Survey*, the source of this data, we extend a big "Thank You!" Without the voluntary cooperation of about 3,000 businesses statewide, we would not be able to provide this valuable data.

Utah Department of Workforce Services

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April 2003

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Unemployment Rates Remain High in US, Utah and Eastern Region

January's unemployment rate in Utah was unchanged at 5.6 percent when compared with December 2002. Approximately 63,900 Utahans were unemployed in January, a 7.7 percent decrease from January of 2002. Nationally, the unemployment rate fell to 5.7 percent in January, as the number of unemployed persons was 8.3 million.

| County | Jan 2002 | Jan 2003 |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Daggett | 6.1% | 6.0% |
| Duchesne | 7.2% | 8.4% |
| Uintah | 5.3% | 6.7% |
| Carbon | 5.3% | 7.1% |
| Emery | 10.9% | 10.1% |
| Grand | 7.1% | 8.6% |
| San Juan | 9.0% | 9.7% |
| Utah | 5.2% | 5.6% |
| United States | 5.6% | 5.7% |

"We have hit a period in the last few months where the economy is operating just above an idling speed. Employers are still hiring and laying off, but the net effect is very close to a canceling-out," observes Mark Knold, Senior Economist for the Department of Workforce Services.

Unemployment rates have increased considerably in

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| Blanding | (435) 678-1400 |
| Castle Dale | (435) 381-6100 |
| Moab | (435) 719-2600 |
| Monticello | (435) 587-2016 |
| Price | (435) 636-2300 |
| Roosevelt | (435) 722-6500 |
| Vernal | (435) 781-4100 |

the Uintah Basin as well as the southeast counties, with the exception of Emery County, though that county at 10.1 percent still has the highest unemployment rate in the region. The uncertainty of oil and gas prices continues to impact all of the energy-producing counties as industry remains cautious about investing in further oil and gas exploration.

jobs.utah.gov

Utah's Job Connection